

Message Text

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17

ACTION AGR-08

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EUR-12 EA-06 IO-10 ISO-00 CEA-01

CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FRB-03 H-01 INR-07

INT-05 L-02 LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05

CIEP-01 SS-15 STR-01 TAR-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01

SP-02 OMB-01 FEA-01 SAJ-01 /114 W

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R 100623Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5024

INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

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PASS AGRICULTURE FOR MEEKER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, EGEN, AS

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIAN BEEF SALE TO USSR

1. AUSTRALIAN MEAT BOARD DELEGATION LED BY CHAIRMAN COLONEL MCARTHUS NEGOTIATED CONTRACT WITH PRODINTORG FOR SUPPLY OF 40,000 METRIC TONS OF BEEF AS FROZEN HINDS AND FORES FOR DELIVERY BETWEEN MARCH AND OCTOBER 1975. CONTRACT WAS SIGNED IN MOSCOW LATE FEBRUARY 7, AND PRICE DETAILS NOT YET DISCLOSED. HOWEVER, BASED ON CURRENT EXPORT VALUES THE CONTRACT COULD BE WORTH DOLLARS AUSTRALIAN 30 MILLION. AS THE USSR HAS BOUGHT MATCHED HINDS AND FORES WITHOUT
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BRISKETS, THE PROBLEM OF ONCHOCERCA INFESTATION IN BRISKETS DOES NOT

ARISE WITH THIS SALE. A USSR VETERINARIAN IS PRESENTLY IN AUSTRALIA TO EXAMINE THIS PROBLEM IN CONNECTION WITH POSSIBLE FUTURE SALES.

2. AS IN EARLIER USSR CONTRACTS, THE ACTUAL CONTRACT IS BETWEEN THE AMB AND PRODINTORG, BUT THE SHIPMENTS WILL BE PUT TOGETHER BY A CONSORTIUM OF AUSTRALIAN PACKERS ON BEHALF OF THE AMB. EXACT SHIPPING DETAILS HAVE NOT YET BEEN WORKED OUT, BUT SHIPMENT O BALTIC/BLACK SEA AND PACIFIC PORTS WITH PROPORTION YET TO BE DETERMINED. ON PRESENT INDICATIONS THIS COULD MEAN ABOUT 50 PERCENT TO EACH AREA, BUT WILL DEPEND ON VESSELS AVAILABLE.

3. AGATTACHE COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE SALE IS MOST WELCOME AT A TIME WHEN LIVESTOCK MARKETS ARE AT THEIR LOWEST LEVEL FOR SOME YEARS, THE VOLUME IS UNLIKELY TO MAKE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON CURRENT PRICE LEVELS. THE CONTRACT WAS FIRST MOOTED IN DECEMBER, AND ORAL AGREEMENT HAS APPARENTLY BEEN REACHED WHEN PRODINTORG REFUSED TO GO AHEAD ON INSPECTION GROUNDS. AMB AND INDUSTRY SUSPECTED REASON FOR STALLING WAS AVAILABILITY OF LOW-PRICED MEAT FROM EEC, AND CONSEQUENT EXPECTATION AUSTRALIA WOULD HAVE TO COME DOWN TO EC PRICELEVEL. UNOFFICIAL CONTACT IN TRADE REPORTED TO AGATTACHE OFFICE THAT PRICE WAS APPROXIMATELY \$A700 PER METRIC TON, AND THAT CONTRACT PROVIDED FOR

OPTION OF FURTHER 20,000 TONS. HOWEVER, GOA OFFICIALS WERE UNABLE TO CONFIRM AT THIS STAGE PENDING RECEIPT FURTHER DETAILS FROM MOSCOW. HARROP

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